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ANIMAL WELFARE INSTITUTE

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August 27, 1999

TO: Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

FROM: Christine Stevens, President *CS*
Animal Welfare Institute

On behalf of the Animal Welfare Institute, I am writing to urge the Food and Drug Administration to prohibit forced molting of laying hens.

We object to this extreme cruelty, which has become an industry practice for lack of humane requirements. FDA has the plain duty in the protection of human health to prevent the diseases that inevitably attack many of the starving hens' immune systems.

Salmonella and Cryptosporidium, the most common contaminants of eggs, are brought about as a result of forced molting. To protect the health, especially of children and senior citizens, it is essential that the Food and Drug Administration use its authority to ban injurious farm practices. While the hen is suffering from infection brought on by the unnecessary practice of forced molting, the infectious agent is transferred to the eggs and to the consumers of such polluted eggs.

The petition calling for FDA to ban forced molting was submitted to your office in April of last year. We are unaware of any action taken by the Food and Drug Administration on this urgently needed ban. Please let us know why it has not yet been put in effect.

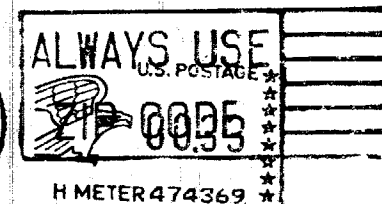
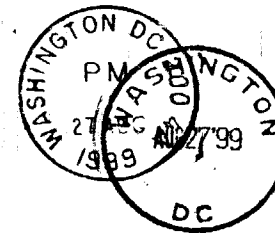
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CROSS FILE SHEET

File Number: 98N-1230/ *C 437*

See File Number: 97P-0197/ *C 438*

96P-0418/ *C 437*